CLAS Book Launch

The Dialectic Is in the Sea: The Black Radical Thought of Beatriz Nascimento

Thursday 30 November – 6pm
S2, Second Floor, Alison Richard Building, 7 West Road, CB3 9DT

Speakers:
Archie Davies (Queen Mary University of London)
Christen Smith (University of Texas)

Beatriz Nascimento (1942–1995) was a poet, historian, artist, and political leader in Brazil’s Black movement, an innovative and creative thinker whose work offers a radical reimagining of gender, space, politics, and spirituality around the Atlantic and across the Black diaspora. Her powerful voice still resonates today, reflecting a deep commitment to political organizing, revisionist historiography, and the lived experience of Black women. The Dialectic Is in the Sea: The Black Radical Thought of Beatriz Nascimento is the first English-language collection of writings by this vitally important figure in the global tradition of Black radicalism. Co-edited and translated by Christen A. Smith, Archie Davies, and Bethânia Gomes, Beatriz Nascimento’s only daughter, the book traces the development of Nascimento’s thought across the decades of her activism and writing, covering topics such as the Black woman, race and Brazilian society, Black freedom, and Black aesthetics and spirituality. Incisive introductory and analytical essays provide key insights into the political and historical context of Nascimento’s work.

Christen Smith is Director for the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies, Associate Professor of African and African Diaspora Studies and Anthropology at the University of Texas in Austin. She is one of the co-editors and co-translators of The Dialectic is in the Sea with Archie Davies and Bethânia Gomes. Her work primarily focuses on transnational anti-Black police violence, Black liberation struggles, the paradox of Black citizenship in the Americas, and the dialectic between the enjoyment of Black culture and the killing of Black people. She is author of Afro-Paradise: Blackness, Violence and Performance in Brazil (Illinois, 2016) and editor, with Lorraine Leu, of Black Feminist Constellations: Dialogue and Translation across the Americas, published by University of Texas Press in 2023.

Archie Davies is a Lecturer in Geography and Fellow of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences at Queen Mary University of London. He is one of the co-editors and co-translators of The Dialectic is in the Sea with Christen A. Smith and Bethânia Gomes. He is a cultural and historical geographer working across political ecology and the history and philosophy of geography. As well as translation and the intellectual history of Brazilian radical thought, his research addresses food, hunger, nature, race, and embodiment. His book A World Without Hunger: Josué de Castro and the History of Geography was published open access by Liverpool University Press in 2022 and his translation of Milton Santos’ For a New Geography was published by the University of Minnesota Press in 2021.